

# ROCK CREEK MESA

## REZONE LETTER OF INTENT



VICINITY MAP

**Owner/ Applicant:** Colorado Springs Equities LLC  
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**Tax Schedule No:** 6530300022 (A Portion Of); 7500000236 (A Portion Of);  
6531200007 (A Portion Of); 6530400009; 6530300017;  
6530401001

**Site Location, History, Size, Zoning:**

Matrix Design Group on behalf of Colorado Springs Equities LLC is submitting a request for a rezone for a portion of the subdivision known as Rock Creek Mesa. The site contains numerous parcels as part of the Rock Creek Mesa community in El Paso County. The parcel areas are located off State Highway 115 accessed via Pawnee Road and Cherokee Drive south of Colorado Springs. The proposed parcels are surrounded by a mix of residential uses ranging from a Mobile Home park to large lot, single unit dwellings. The current zoning includes Forestry/ Recreation (F-5) and Commercial Community (CC).

**Request & Justification:**

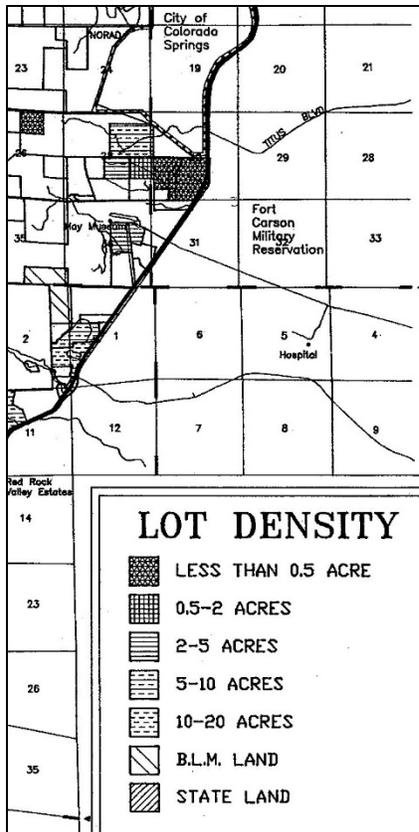
The purpose of this application is to request approval of a Rezone for a portion of the Rock Creek Mesa subdivision. The proposed submittal seeks to rezone 37.262 acres from Forestry and Recreation (F-5)/ Commercial Community (CC) to Residential Suburban (RS-5,000) permitting a minimum size single-family lot of 5,000 square feet. The remaining Rock Creek Mesa area will remain zoned F-5, RM-30. A preliminary concept layout illustrates approximately 162 units. This preliminary concept plan will be the basis for future preliminary plan submittals at which time the number of units and proposed density will be determined. The proposed rezone parcels are part



of the area wide Rock Creek Mesa Master Plan completed in 1971. This Master Plan illustrated 176 acres with 1,542 proposed residential units comprising of single-family detached, townhomes, apartments, a Mobile Home Park in addition to a school site, and commercial acreage.

[El Paso County Approval Criteria, 1998 El Paso County Policy Plan, and Small Area Master Plan](#)

The 1998 El Paso County Policy Plan establishes broad goals and policies intended to serve as a framework for land use applications and development in the County. The County Wide Policy Plan ties the specific small area plans, and other Master Plan elements such as the Water Master Plan, Master Plan for Mineral Extraction, El Paso County Department of Parks and Leisure Services Master Plan and the Major Transportation Corridors Plan. The Policy Plan provides general direction in terms of water use, density, buffers, transitions, and infrastructure where no small area plan exists. The Rock Creek Mesa Rezone meets the requirements of these planning tools as outlined in more detail within the sections below.



The proposed rezone is part of the existing Southwestern/ Highway 115 Comprehensive Plan approved July 24, 1990. This Small Area Plan illustrates a lot density of 0.5 acre or less in the area of the Rock Creek Mesa. This master plan also identified a mix of zone and land uses to include Forest & Recreation, Mobile Home Park, Residential, Planned Business Park and Planned Business Center. The existing Rock Creek Mesa community area includes a 43-acre mobile home park; a mix of residential lots sized 10,000 square feet to over a half acre; vacant land; and a volunteer fire station.

The Southwestern/ Highway 115 Comprehensive Plan emphasizes a land use goal of “a majority of future development will likely be concentrated along Highway 115 where the natural constraints are limited”. The requested Rezone application achieves this goal of future development by concentrating the proposed lots near Highway 115 and providing infill for vacant areas within Rock Creek Mesa. The proposed areas of development avoid areas of steep topography or areas with mature vegetation limiting impact to wildlife supporting the Hwy 115 Comp Plan *Conservation Goal 1D Encourage Awareness and Appreciation of the Unique Character and Policy 2A and 2D clustering housing and design to blend in with the natural environment*. The

areas to be developed are primarily vacant lots surrounded by existing residential uses.

Additionally, the requested Rezone would eliminate the Commercial Community designation to be more harmonious with the existing subdivision and eliminating potentially intense and adverse uses. The Commercial Community area to be revised as residential would be blended with the spacious density of the Forest & Recreation zoning to achieve the proposed residential RS-5000 zoning. The requested Rezone would also balance out the higher density of the adjacent mobile home park’s 236 units on 43 acres by providing single-family residential lots. These intentional design elements support County Policies:

*Policy 6.1.5: Support the development of well-planned mixed-use projects and*

*Policy 6.1.11: Plan and implement land development so that it will be functionally and aesthetically integrated within the context of adjoining properties and uses*

In addition, the rezone design approach meets the Southwest/ Hwy 115 Comp Plan: *Land Use Goal 1C Encourage integrated, internally oriented developments sensitive to the area and Land Use Policy 2D Majority of growth should occur along Hwy 115 in discreet nodes of integrated, internally oriented development.*

The existing topography of the site is mostly mild grade, draining to the east/ southeast towards Highway 115. Mountain frontage views angle to the south-southwest generally paralleling Highway 115. Another goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to “encourage an awareness and appreciation of the unique character and natural resources of the Planning Area in existing and future residents”. This goal was further stated in the conservation policy “...development should be clustered in nodes along Highway 115 and utilize natural buffers to avoid creating a continuous

*front of development along the highway”.* The proposed Rezone and Preliminary Concept Plan demonstrate this goal and policy by providing in-fill to the cluster of existing development at Rock Creek Mesa while preserving the open views and natural visual character of the Highway 115 corridor. The proposed rezone will not have a negative impact upon the existing and future development of the area, but rather remove the area zoned for Commercial Community and continue the neighboring feel of residential lots supporting County Policy:

*Policy 6.1.3: Encourage new development which is contiguous and compatible with previously developed areas in terms of factors such as density, land use and access*

There is currently no utilities or drainage infrastructure in place to serve the rezone and future development areas included with this request. As part of future land development applications municipal services for water and wastewater will be extended to serve this development atop Rock Creek Mesa. In addition, all drainage and stormwater impacts will be mitigated as required by both El Paso County and the State of Colorado. Water and wastewater sufficiency will be provided with future preliminary plan submittals. The extension of municipal services supports:

*Policy 6.1.1: Allow for a balance of mutually supporting interdependent land uses*

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the area of Rock Creek Mesa subdivision as having soil constraints for building sites ranging from slight to moderate-severe. The proposed Rezone area would utilize mostly the “slight” soil constraint areas, avoiding steep unstable slopes. Any required preliminary soils investigations or Geological Hazards Studies will be completed as required with future land development applications.

**Total Number of Residential Units, Density, and Lot Sizes:** Detailed preliminary plan and final plat submittals will finalize lot layout and proposed density. The 162 Single-Family Detached Residential Units on 37.262 acres creates a density of 4.35 DU/ Acre. The minimum lot size shall be 5,000 SF as required under the RS-5000 zoning guidelines.

**Types of Proposed Recreational Facilities:**

There are no recreational facilities being proposed with this application for rezone. Potential trail corridors within the proposed project limits will be coordinated during the preliminary plan and final plat submittals as part of the detailed lot layout.

**Total Number of Industrial or Commercial Sites:**

There are no proposed commercial or industrial sites proposed as a part of the plan.

**Traffic and Proposed Access Locations:**

Primary access to the Rock Creek Mesa subdivision will be via existing Pawnee Drive providing access to several of the proposed parcel areas. Additional connections and access points will be provided via Piute Drive, Comanche Road and Cherokee Drive. All existing roadways are public and will remain public. There is no individual lot access proposed to Highway 115. A Traffic Impact Study completed as part of this submittal assumes conversion of the Cherokee/SH 115 intersection to a right-in/right-out as request by CDOT to help improve safety in the area. The intersection of Pawnee/SH 115 is projected to meet a four-hour traffic signal warrant with the conversion of Cherokee/SH 115 to a right-in/right-out intersection based on site-generated traffic. The potential future development and resulting trip generation of the parcel northwest of SH 115/Pawnee would also likely add turning movements which could result in the future need for

the signal. Due to the potential future need to signalize the intersection of Pawnee/SH 115, and the need to mitigate the intersection spacing of less than one-mile along Highway 115, the future signal would need to be a “directional” signal with the channelized T configuration. The recommended classification for Pawnee is Urban Collector from SH 115 to 1,100 ft west of SH 115 and Urban Local from this point west to Comanche Road as illustrated in the traffic report. West of this point, the recommended roadway classification is for Pawnee to remain a Rural Local roadway. All other existing roadways will remain as existing Rural Local roads. The existing roadways in the community may be improved for the benefit of the existing residents as well as to improve safety to better serve the community.

All proposed roadways as part of new development will be built as urban local residential roadways. Internally designed streets will provide a combination of looped circulation patterns and cul-de-sacs as illustrated in the preliminary concept plan.

The proposed rezone meets the Southwest/ Hwy 115 Transportation *Policy 2B Limit Hwy 115 Access Points and Policy 2C Existing Access Points should be improved in conjunction with Policy 2B.*

**Phasing Plan:**

There is no phasing plan for this development as it will be developed in one phase.

**Areas of Required Landscaping:**

The proposed development does not require any landscaping; however, landscape setbacks and buffers will be provided as required with future development plan submittals. All tracts shall be owned and maintained by the Rock Creek Metropolitan District and/ or a Homeowner’s Association.

**Approximate Acres and Percent of Land Set Aside for Open Space:**

There is no open space required with the Rezone. Any land set aside for open space will be illustrated with future preliminary plan submittals.

**Water and Wastewater Services:**

Water and Wastewater municipal services will be supplied by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) through a service agreement with the Rock Creek Metropolitan District. The Rock Creek Metropolitan District will own and maintain all proposed utility mains and service lines per the service agreement. Any required utility easements to be provided on adjacent properties will be acquired as necessary to allow for proper utility installation. Approval and granting of any required utility easements will be completed as necessary with future land development applications.

**El Paso County Water Master Plan:**

The Rock Creek Mesa development area as illustrated within the rezone boundaries as part of this application is located within Region 1 (Colorado Springs Area) of the Water Master Plan. Region 1 is comprised almost entirely within the City of Colorado Springs city limits and is only projected to have one significant growth area in the unincorporated part of the County by 2040. This development is Rock Creek, of which this rezone is a part. The Region 1 growth area can be found on the Region 7 Map. The Rock Creek Mesa development is currently located within the potential service area of the Rock Creek Mesa Water District; however, as the Rock Creek Mesa Water District lacks capacity to serve the land subject to this rezone application, the Rock Creek Mesa

development proposed herein will seek to obtain municipal services for water and wastewater supply from Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU). The Rock Creek Metropolitan District is seeking to enter into a service agreement with CSU for these services. The Rock Creek Metropolitan District currently has approval to begin construction of these utilities bringing water, wastewater and fire protection services to the Rock Creek Mesa. While many of the existing homes within the area are on well or cistern provided water supply, there are no proposed wells or individual septic systems within this development. The Rock Creek Mesa development will seek the Colorado State Engineer's sufficiency of water finding for both quantity and quality with future Preliminary Plan permitting administrative review of the final plats.

The Rock Creek Mesa Rezone meets the stated master plan Goals and Policies through integrated master planning of site design, extension of municipal services, and water resource best management practices:

- Goal 1.2 – Integrate water and land use planning
- Goal 4.2 – Support the efficient use of water supplies
- Goal 6.1.2 – Promote water conservation

**Master Plan for Mineral Extraction:**

The *1996 Master Plan for Mineral Extraction* updates and supersedes the *1975 El Paso County Master Plan for Mineral Extraction of Commercial Mineral Deposits* as amended in 1978 and 1982. This updated plan has two primary purposes, the first is to facilitate continued compliance with the mineral resource protection mandates outlined in the "Preservation of Commercial Mineral Deposits Act" of 1973 and the second is to provide guidance to the El Paso County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in evaluating land use proposals involving new or expanded mining and mineral resource processing operations. Per the El Paso County Master Plan for Mineral Extraction Aggregate Resource Maps, this site is identified as 'Mesa Gravel' containing sand and gravel with silt and clay deposited by older streams and slope wash on upland mesas which slope gently from the mountains. The proposed project does not contain any mineral deposits of commercial value and does not permit the use of any area containing a commercial mineral deposit which would unreasonably interfere with the present or future extraction of such deposits.

**Proposed Services:**

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|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Water:             | Colorado Springs Utilities          |
| 2. Wastewater:        | Colorado Springs Utilities          |
| 3. Gas:               | Colorado Springs Utilities          |
| 4. Electric:          | Colorado Springs Utilities          |
| 5. Fire:              | SW Hwy 115 Fire Protection District |
| 6. Police Protection: | El Paso County Sheriff's Department |
| 7. School:            | Fountain Fort Carson #8             |